



MINDS MATTER
LOS ANGELES

2020-2021 Impact Report



A woman with short grey hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, is seen from the side, facing a young woman. The young woman has long dark hair and is wearing a white graduation gown with blue trim. She is smiling and looking towards the older woman. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Persevering, Together

As I reflected on this past year, I remembered a line from a Grateful Dead song, “what a long, strange trip it’s been.” With some amazing highs and rough lows, we navigated a year of complete virtual sessions. When the Juniors had their first session in August, in person, it was both awkward and exhilarating as students and volunteers “met” each other for the first time though they have been working together for over a year. The energy in the room was electric reminding me again of the magic that is the Minds Matter community.

From welcoming our very first Sophomore class in the new Orange County location to celebrating, in person, with the Class of 2021 at their graduation, the year was an emotional roller coaster for all. Through it all, the Minds Matter volunteers created safe spaces for students to process all of the mixed emotions, assisted with homework to keep students academically on track, provided technology when needed and created fun virtual experiences like murder mysteries and trivia games when we all needed a break from our reality.

We enhanced the support for our alumni by creating our College Success team. This team works with Freshman and Sophomores to ease the transition from high school to college made all the more difficult with a pandemic. The College Success team adds a level of academic and career readiness support that complements our monthly alumni Connections focused on the social emotional support. All of these efforts align beautifully with our newly defined student outcomes:

- Healthy, supported and empowered leaders
- Family and community advocates
- Life-long learners
- Thriving and secure college graduates and professionals

Thank you for uniting behind the dreams of our students. Together, we are changing the world one student at a time.



Our Mission

Minds Matter connects driven and determined students from low-income families with the people, preparation, and possibilities to succeed in college, create their future, and change the world.

The Problems We Solve

OPPORTUNITY GAP

One of the root causes of systemic racism is the educational inequities faced by low-income communities of color. The dearth of academic resources directed to low-income communities creates an opportunity gap that limits the ability of high potential students to advance as quickly as their peers in more affluent areas.

UNDERMATCHING

High-achieving students from low-income families regularly apply to colleges below their academic ability. Reasons for this undermatching include lack of individualized preparation for SAT testing, no access to academically enriching summer programs, and an absence of mentors who have excelled in college and gone on to successful careers.



OUR IMPACT

100% of our graduates have been accepted to 4-year universities

93% of our alumni graduate from college, most within 4 years

77% of our students attend Barron's top 3 tier colleges and universities

95% program retention rate

17% of our alumni have earned or are pursuing graduate degrees

500+ hours of instruction in math, writing, critical thinking, and test prep



Our Budget

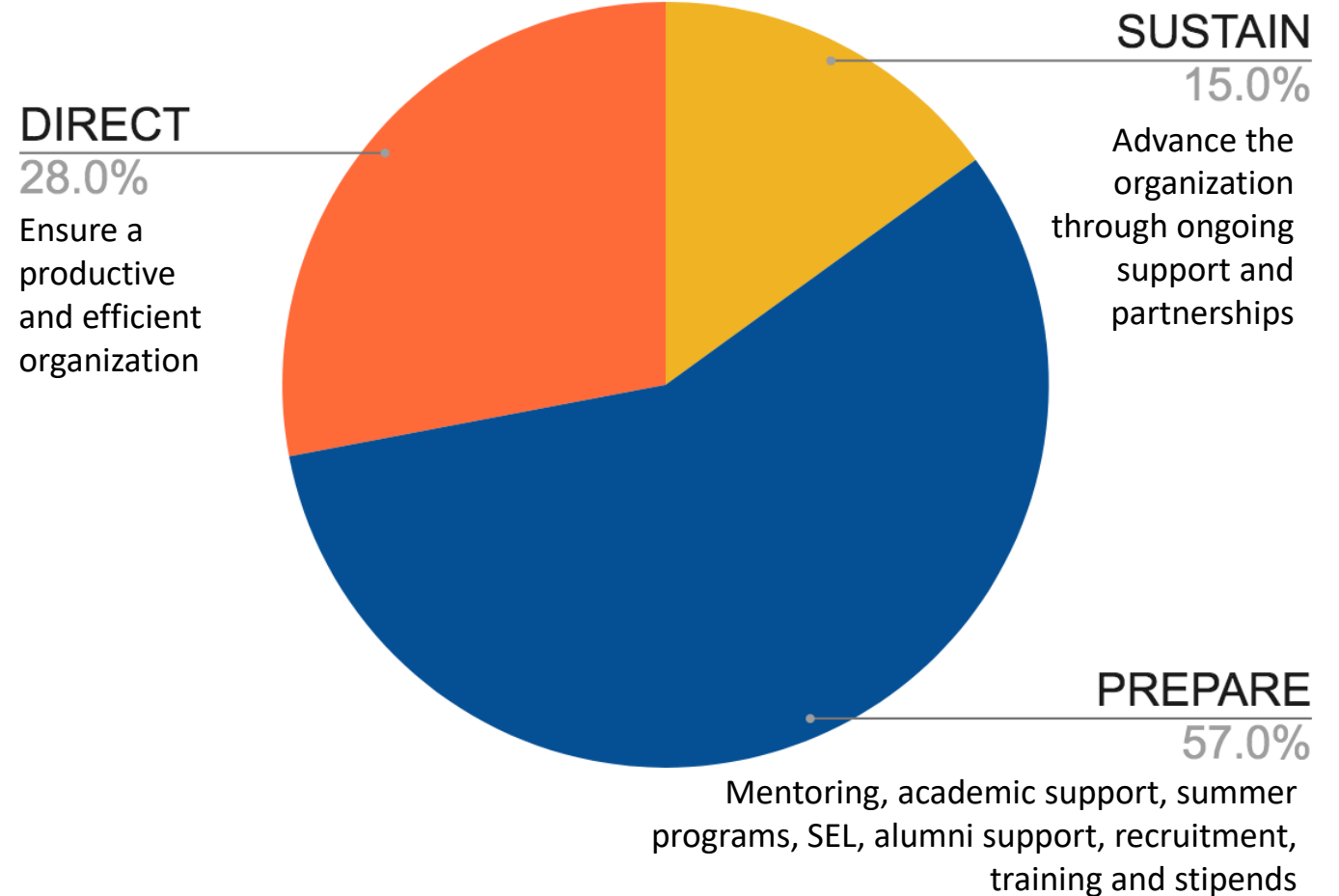
Minds Matter operates on a lean budget that leverages volunteers and other in-kind services. With few paid staff but a dedicated volunteer base, Minds Matter has been able to focus on its strategy while keeping costs low.

3:1

Volunteer to student ratio

\$687,526

Estimated value of all volunteer hours donated to Minds Matter in 2020-2021



Our Work



ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Students receive writing instruction, tutoring in math, and intensive personalized SAT preparation



MENTORING

2:1 mentor to student ratio. Mentors guide, challenge and champion their student



PROFESSIONAL PATHWAYS

Corporate partners offer students and alumni the opportunity to explore careers, make connections, and gain professional work experience



LIFE SKILLS

Leadership development and financial literacy provide critical skills for success in college and life



SUMMER PROGRAMS

Sophomores and juniors participate in summer programs at top universities to experience college level courses and life on campus



SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

SEL teaches life skills and strategies that support academic and professional functioning as well as healthy brain development

Social & Emotional Learning

Social & Emotional Learning (SEL) teaches life skills and strategies through Connections®, a tool for storytelling, learning from the experience of others, and collecting wisdom.

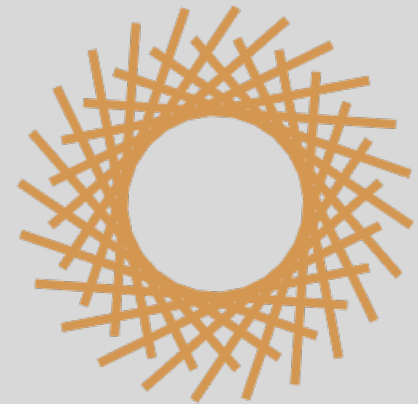
Prompts are designed to evoke a personal story surrounding meaningful topics relevant to participants – they are active participants in their own learning.

We offer a process that normalizes the sharing of personal stories, puts stories of BIPOC at the forefront, and sends the message to participants that all voices are important and who they are is enough.


MMLA has partnered with Calibrate, a non-profit focused on the emotional empowerment of young people in underserved communities.

"I feel like MMLA has helped me grow as a person overall, this encompasses every aspect of what it means to be human: growing one's knowledge, relationship with people, and relationship with yourself."

Anonymous, MMLA '21



CALIBRATE



College Success Team

"The continuous support, not only through providing us with lots of financial support but also with all the office hours series and the Connections Circles, has aided me tremendously through my college journey. Attending office hours allowed me to see my MMLA classmates, and it definitely helped my dorm feel a little like home despite it being on Zoom. Attending a PWI is not easy for a lot of us, so being able to take a few hours to speak to people who feel the struggle and share our experience helped relieve some of the repressed feelings. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to be a part of a welcoming community that supports us beyond high school."

Anonymous, MMA '19

Getting accepted into college is a huge milestone, but ultimately, we want all of our students to complete college. There are a myriad of reasons why a student does not complete college. The Minds Matter College Success Team (CST) seeks to ensure all of our students have the resources and support needed to graduate from college.

Our College Success Team supports our 1st and 2nd-year college students navigate the transition to college, especially during the difficult freshman year. Through scheduled check-ins, the CST will help students navigate academic planning, resolve financial aid questions, and provide job and internship support with resume review and practice interviews.

EVENTS






Career Incubator

Low-income college students face an **opportunity divide** when it comes to landing their first job. They are often the first in their families to pursue a professional career. COVID-19 and its devastating impact on families and the economy have created even more urgency and challenges.

The 2021 Career Incubator was a one-day virtual event bringing together over 75 professionals across entertainment, law, tech, gaming and a variety of fields with students from MMLA and other local organizations. The event focused on equity issues in the professional world with guest speakers discussing the realities of equity in their profession, company, and industry. We also hosted a panel with heads of DEI talking about what is happening and not happening with regard to equity in corporate America.

A special thank you to our partners: Amazon Web Services, Beach Point Capital, iHeartMedia, Luther Burbank Savings, O'Melveny & Myers, Renewable Resources Group LLC, and Unity Technologies.



"The Let's Be Real: Corporate America session allowed me to see a diverse group of individuals explain how they were impacted by racism, but also how they fought against it and thrived. It made me feel like I can still get to a prestigious position despite being brown."

Anonymous, MMLA '20

NBC Media Fellows

The NBC Media Fellows program is a multi-day experiential learning opportunity for our current students and alumni. After an overview of the NBCUniversal business, students are presented with a business case to work on as a team. NBC employees provide guidance and insight to the student teams while also challenging their conclusions and assumptions. The business case helps students learn more about NBCUniversal's business and the entertainment industry in general. Students also build transferable skills such as team work, collaboration, data analysis and conflict resolution. They hone their public speaking and persuasion skills during their final presentation in front of NBCUniversal business leaders when they get feedback on their proposed solutions.

During lunches, students interact with NBCU employees from across the company. These "lunch buddies" help expand students' awareness of what is possible for themselves, helping to imagine new and different paths for their future.

A number of students who participated in the Media Fellows program then pursued internships within NBCU. It is a great example of the benefits both Minds Matter and NBCU have received from the partnership.





Most Unfor

"I'm grateful that I had this amazing opportunity to be in the program and met so many great people. I also feel accomplished because I was able to get into a four-year university where before I preferred community college as my only option."

Anonymous, MMLA '21

College Signing Day & Graduation

Graduating from high school is an essential milestone for low-income families. While we celebrated our College Signing Day virtually, we were able to hold a small, in-person graduation. It was an emotional ceremony for the Class of 2021, who had not been together since March 2020.

The last time students were with their Minds Matter classmates was March 2020. A year later, MMLA students have made many life-changing decisions without ever stepping foot onto prospective campuses. During what would've been a time of visiting college campuses, they were figuring out their future through their computer screens while isolated in their homes.

Despite the pandemic, students had their eyes set on their dream schools, and some applied early decisions. Many applied their in-person summer school experiences from their sophomore year and their online program during their junior year to weigh their school choices.



2021 Graduates

Jai-Laan

Washington University in St. Louis

Ashley

Northeastern University

Melanie

UC Irvine

Jacqueline

Wesleyan University

Aman

UC Merced

Alberto

East Los Angeles College

Itzel

Stanford University

Marcus

Carnegie Mellon University

Jason

CSU Long Beach

Giselle

Mount Saint Mary's University

Emily

UCLA

Tam

CSU Fullerton

Andrea

Columbia University

Antonio

Stanford University

Marvin

University of Pennsylvania

Ingrid

UC Irvine

Adriana

CSU Long Beach

Briyit

Johns Hopkins University

Rebekah

UC Berkeley

Andy

Bowdoin College

Matthew

UCLA

FY2021 Supporters

\$50,000 and Above

Landmark MSO
Renaissance

\$25,000 to \$49,999

NBC Universal
Edward and Al O'Shay Family Foundation
PwC Foundation
All Ways Up Foundation
Leonard Green & Partners

\$10,000 to \$24,999

Dodger Foundation
Harmonist, Inc.
Capital Group
Jessie Collins
Activision
Mark Hughes Foundation
UBS Financial Services

\$2,500 to \$9,999

Alexandria Real Estate
Luther Bank Savings
Netflix
Amazon Smile
Andres Curtolo
Jon Christian
Ari-Hovig Ishkhanian
Banc of California
Beach Point Capital Management
iHeart Media
Marina Cortazzo
Sabina Skulsky and Mark Jungers
City National Bank
O'Melveny

Renewable Resources Group LLC
CBRE
Tina & Bill Admans
Elizabeth Garfield
Anna Lee
Kathryn Page
Matthew Covington
Anonymous

\$1,000 to \$2,499

Shem Streeter
Gary Fraser
Leala S. Crawford
Ruth Kremen
Min Park
Noath Mitz
Skip Rimer
Apple
Amiyr Jackson
Dionne Harmon
Phillipa Cannon
Bank of America
Bel Air Investment Advisors
Bobby & Dawn Jenkins
Candice Lu
Frank Leal
Lakshmi Achia
Madhu Pocha
Matt Ross
Milton Howery
Paul Modiano
Paul Sandweiss
Reena Singh
Steven Rifkind
Sunny Anderson



\$500 to \$999

Lorraine Thayer-Haverka
Caitlin O'Donnell
JM & Thomas E Marsh
Jill Weinberg
Keith Pew
Edgar Smith
Heisson Sanchez
Leanne Huebner
Kim Lighthouse
Michael and Dana Dack
Kilroy Realty
Aditi Iyer
Angela Jackson
Arthur Santos
Brandon Riegg
Brian and Dalia Flanagan
Cristal Baker
Danielle Silveira
Eddie Rankin and Megan Weikel
IA Local 871 Script Supervisors
Jennifer Kutsunai

Jonathan & Britt Levine
Kim & Adam
Kim Rodriguez
Mason Kroll
Michele Dilorenzo
Olivia Kahr
Peter Lonjers
Rose Hills Foundation
Sophia Chung
Susan Zirinsky
Tim and Bhanu Calvert

Minds Matter is also extremely grateful to the more than 500 donors not included in this report. Every donation, big or small, helps us make our students' dreams their reality."



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